



Mirae and the Cloud with Unfinished Business

On a day like any other, when the world feels both big and small, this story begins...

Three Things Before Lunch

Mirae woke up feeling sparkly and bright — like sunshine dancing on water.

She bounced out of bed, pulled on her clothes, and hurried to her art table. All week, she had been thinking about a painting: a yellow house beneath a wide blue sky, with a path curling through the grass and disappearing somewhere beyond the edge of the paper.

She painted the house first. Then the grass. She had just dipped her brush into blue when she noticed her dragon book beside the bed.

Perhaps, she thought, she would read one chapter while the yellow paint dried.

Three pages later, the dragon had reached a broken stone bridge. Mirae looked at the wooden blocks beneath her table. She could build that bridge. Not an ordinary bridge either — one with a tower at each end and a secret room underneath.

Soon the book lay open on the rug, the painting waited on the table, and a wooden bridge stretched halfway from Mirae's bed to the door.

Mirae sat back on her heels, pleased. The bridge needed another tower. The dragon needed rescuing. The sky needed clouds.

Then Emma's voice returned from yesterday.

"You never finish anything, Mirae."

Emma had not laughed when she said it. She had only looked at the half-made paper kite on Mirae's desk and observed it the way she might have observed that the answer to six plus six was twelve.

That almost made it worse.

Emma always finished her work. She always knew which game she wanted to play. She had a favorite color, a favorite book, and a favorite sandwich. When Mrs. Light asked a question, Emma's hand was usually the first one in the air — and usually, Emma was right.

So if Emma said Mirae never finished anything, perhaps she was right about that too.

Mirae looked around her room again.

The painting no longer looked like a yellow house waiting for its sky. It looked unfinished.

The book looked abandoned.

The bridge looked like proof.

A breeze lifted the curtain, carrying the smell of warm grass through the open window.

Mirae looked outside. She had painted enough. She had read enough. The bridge could wait.

She jumped up — and nearly stepped on one of its towers.

Her mom appeared in the doorway.

“Well,” she said, looking around. “You’ve started quite a few projects today.”

Mirae followed her eyes from the half-painted house to the open book and the bridge without an end.

“They’ll need finishing, you know.”

“I know.”

“Which one do you want to do first?”

Mirae picked up a wooden block. She put it on the bridge, took it off again, and looked toward the window.

“None of them.”

“None?”

“Not now. I want to go outside. A breeze came through my window, caught the curtains, and disappeared again. I want to find out where it went.”

Her mom pointed to the blocks covering the doorway. "Then you do need to move these first. I'd like to keep all my toes."

Mirae began gathering them. She had almost filled the basket when Emma's voice returned.

You never finish anything, Mirae.

She looked at the painting. The book. The bridge she was now taking apart instead of completing.

"Emma says I never finish anything."

Her mom took a block from beneath the chair and handed it to her. "Does she?"

Mirae dropped it into the basket.

"She might be right."

Mirae's eyes moved from the half-painted house to the open book, then to the bridge she had just taken apart. She dropped the last block into the basket.

When the doorway was clear, her mom moved aside.

"Go on, then. Find your breeze. And if it takes you through the woods, the trees are good listeners. They don't say much, but somehow you feel lighter afterward."

At the Favorite Meadow

The breeze was waiting outside.

It stirred the leaves along the garden path, slipped beneath the gate, and disappeared.

Mirae hurried after it, taking her moody thoughts with her.

A dragonfly sat on top of the fence post, its blue-green wings spread wide in the sun. It looked as though it had always lived there and had no plans to go anywhere else.

Then the breeze returned.

The grass bent. The dragonfly lifted from the post and sailed away with it.

“There you are,” Mirae said, and followed them both.

The dragonfly soon vanished among the trees, but the breeze kept going. It tossed leaves across the path, shook sunlight from the branches, and waited at every turn just long enough for Mirae to catch up.

It led her all the way to her favorite meadow.

There, it rippled through the tall grass and disappeared.

Mirae stood still, listening.

Nothing moved except the wildflowers and the last few grass stems settling back into place.

“So that is where you were going,” she said.

She lay down in the sun-warmed grass and looked up.

Clouds drifted through the blue, slowly changing as they went. They stretched and grew, only to change their shapes again before they ever seemed quite finished. One became a long-necked bird. Another grew two towers and turned into a castle on a mountain. Farther away, three smaller clouds joined together, changed their minds, and went their separate ways again.

The clouds were putting on quite a show, and it seemed they were doing it just for her.

Almost directly above Mirae, a soft white cloud began drawing itself together. Two long ears rose from the top. A round body formed beneath them, followed by four paws and a small, perfectly shaped tail.

Then a teapot appeared on its head.

Mirae blinked.

A teapot?

A sudden gust rushed over the treetops.

It struck the rabbit from the side, tore one ear loose, and dragged the teapot into a long white streak. The rabbit's middle opened, and its paws began dissolving into wisps.

"Oh no," said a voice. "No, no, *no*. I had it just perfect, and there it goes. Right when I had the ears exactly right."

Mirae sat up and looked around.

Nobody.

She looked back at the remnants of the rabbit.

A soft pearlescent face appeared between two wispy edges. Her eyes glimmered like drops of rain holding the sun.

"Was that you? Have you just been a rabbit?"

"You *saw* it?" The wisps gathered eagerly around the face as the cloud drifted closer. "You saw the rabbit? You saw the ears? Did you see the teapot?"

"I saw the teapot."

"*Nobody* sees the teapot!"

"It was on his head."

"It was on his head!" cried the cloud, going round in a delighted circle.

"Oh, that is the best thing that has happened to me all week."

As she turned, the last remains of the rabbit stretched behind her. Its body grew long, its heel rounded, and the final piece of the teapot curled upward like a toe.

The cloud stopped and looked down at herself.

"And now I am a sock," she said. "Nobody has ever lain in a meadow and said, 'Look, how beautiful – a sock.'"

Mirae laughed out loud, and the last of the gray thing she had carried out of her bedroom went out of her with it.

"Are you supposed to do that?" she asked.

"Become a sock? No, of course not. There are other things I am supposed to do." The cloud glanced down at her toe. "But as long as I do my work, what I look like in between is my business. Within reason, naturally. Although the wind has a say too, and the wind has very little reason."

"We learned about clouds at school," Mirae said. "You move the water around. You grow bigger and bigger, then it rains and the water goes into the ground and back to the ocean. If I remember it right."

The cloud drew herself up.

"I am not only a cloud, mind you."

The movement made the sock taller, although her face had somehow remained near the toe. Mirae giggled.

“I am Nimara,” she said with offended dignity.

She attempted a small bow and became a question mark halfway through it.

“And yes, I do important work. I gather teeny-tiny drops of water all day long – billions of them, more than anybody could count. I hold them, build them up, and when I have enough, I take the whole construction to exactly the right place and let it go. Everything underneath gets watered. The water sinks down to the roots, travels deeper into the earth and back toward the sea, and after a while the sun brings it up again. Then off we go once more.”

“And then you start all over?”

“Again and again. That is the theory, at least.” Nimara gave the wind a suspicious look. “But the wind often has an opinion of its own, and then being in the right place at the right time becomes a little tricky.”

She stretched herself long across the blue.

“Besides, gathering takes time. I do not have to be serious every single second while I am doing it. While I am finding the next droplets, I can be anything I like.”

“Can you choose what shape you are?” Mirae asked.

“Sometimes.”

“Can you hold it?”

Nimara considered this.

During the consideration, she became a spoon.

“Not always,” she admitted.

“Guess I should introduce myself too. I’m Mirae.”

“I know.”

“You do?”

“The woods talk. I have also seen you many times.”

“How many?”

“Oh, plenty. I may be young in cloud years, but in human years, I am older than anyone you know. I remember when the orchard was three trees and an argument about where to plant the fourth.”

Mirae opened her mouth to ask who had been arguing.

Before she could, a gust caught Nimara’s spoon-shaped middle. It scooped out one side, pushed the other wider, and curled the long handle over the top until she looked remarkably like a bucket.

Nimara studied herself.

Then her raindrop eyes brightened.

“Oh, I know what this could be.”

The bucket’s handle rose into a mast. A sail billowed behind it, and within moments Nimara had become a great white sailing boat floating high above the meadow.

“Look!” she called. “Now I shall sail toward the horizon and discover places no cloud has ever seen before.”

She lifted her bow and filled out her sail. For one splendid moment, she looked ready to set off across the whole wide sky.

Then the breeze swept over the meadow and struck the sail.

It folded in half.

The bow widened. The mast sank. A broad tail appeared where the sail had been.

Nimara looked at herself.

“Oh, wonderful. The wind has tossed away my sail, and now I look like a stranded whale. Who wants to look like a stranded whale?”

“You’re stranded in the sky,” Mirae pointed out.

“That makes it considerably worse.”

The whale’s tail curved upward.

“Although I have always wanted to be a dolphin. They look as though they are having such fun. Have you ever seen them leap out of the sea?”

“Once.”

“Like this?”

Nimara drew herself together. Her broad whale body became smooth and silver-white. A pointed nose appeared, and her tail lifted.

“Higher,” Mirae called.

Nimara rose through the blue.

“More curved!”

She arched her back, and sunlight poured through the fine mist along her edges. For one breath, a shining dolphin leaped across the sky, trailing a ribbon of color behind it.

“You got it!” Mirae cried. “You got it! You got it!”

The ribbon of color hung above the meadow. Mirae stared until it faded, afraid that blinking might make it disappear faster.

“Again!” she called.

Nimara turned and began gathering herself for another leap.

Then a flock of birds crossed the meadow.

“Oh,” Nimara said. “Look at that.”

Her dolphin nose split into a beak. Two wings opened from her back, and she tipped toward the birds.

“Wait!” Mirae called. “You weren’t finished being a dolphin.”

“I know. But look at those wings. I have just had an excellent bird idea.”

“That’s what Emma says I do.”

Nimara stopped. The birds continued across the sky without her.

“What does she say?”

“That I start one thing, and then something else catches my attention. She says I never finish anything.”

Nimara’s wings folded slowly into one another.

“Never?”

“I didn’t think she was right. But when I went back to my room, my painting was still on the floor, my book was lying open, and the bridge was blocking the doorway. I hadn’t finished any of them.” Mirae wound a blade of grass around her finger. “I had been having fun. But after I

remembered what Emma said, my room looked different. All I could see were the things I hadn't finished."

"Oh," Nimara said softly.

For once, she did not immediately turn into anything else.

"And now you think that means you're a bad person, right?"

"She made me sound lazy," Mirae said. "Or as if I can't do things. I don't want her to think that about me. She's my friend."

Then the words came faster.

"But I'm not lazy. Sometimes I don't feel like doing something, or something else is more interesting. But I take care of all the flowers in the garden, and I help Mom set the table and clean up after dinner. I finish lots of things."

"I see," Nimara said. "So Emma noticed something true: you sometimes leave things unfinished. And what you just told me is true as well: you finish things and take care of what depends on you."

"I know," Mirae said. "But I still hear Emma."

"Of course. Never is a very large word, especially when a friend puts it in your ear. I have heard humans use always and never carelessly for centuries. They take a handful of moments and stretch them across a whole person. But never means no exceptions, ever – and I can assure you that a handful of moments cannot make never. Even a cloud cannot stretch it that far."

Mirae's mouth twitched.

"My sailing boat did not mind becoming a whale, and the whale did not mind becoming a dolphin," Nimara continued. "But if I did not gather all those teeny-tiny drops for the plants, they would surely mind."

At the far end of the meadow, a large white cloud was drifting through the blue. It was rounded on top, flat underneath, and puffy in all the right places. Even the wind seemed to pass around it without disturbing so much as an edge.

“Wow, look at that cloud,” Mirae said. “It looks almost majestic. Very serious and composed — like a proper cloud.”

“That’s Caelum,” Nimara replied. “He’s a cumulus.”

“What’s a cumulus?”

“That kind of cloud — flat underneath, with big, rounded puffs on top.” Nimara grinned. “And yes, he is very composed and very serious. But I bet I have a lot more fun. Just don’t tell him I said that.”

“Tell me what?” asked a deep voice.

Nimara’s grin disappeared.

Caelum had drifted close enough for his face to appear among the rounded puffs. There was patience in his eyes and the faintest hint of amusement, as though he already knew exactly what Nimara had said.

“That you are an exceptionally fine cumulus,” Nimara said.

“I am sure that is what you said.”

His voice rolled across the meadow like distant thunder.

“Does he ever laugh?” Mirae asked in a whisper.

“Certainly,” Nimara said. “Once every fifty years.”

“That is not remotely true,” Caelum told Mirae. “I laughed yesterday.”

“That was thunder.”

“You have always had trouble telling the difference.”

Nimara grinned.

“A very serious afternoon you have been having, I see,” said Caelum.

“I might have had a little fun with Mirae. That does not mean I have forgotten my work.” Nimara drew herself up. “I shall be finished in good time. Look at my color if you do not believe me.”

“I did not say you had forgotten,” Caelum said mildly.

And Mirae looked.

The color along Nimara’s underside had deepened from pale gray to charcoal, like pencil shading rubbed with a thumb. She had grown larger and more substantial, and she hung lower over the meadow than before.

Mirae had been watching her all this time and had not noticed her changing.

“You’re not silvery white anymore,” she said.

“That’s because I’m nearly full. The more water I gather, the darker I become. This is what filling up looks like.”

Nimara gave Caelum a triumphant look.

“You see? I can make dolphins and gather water at the same time.”

A drop landed on Mirae’s shoe.

Then another.

“Just for your information,” Caelum said, “you are dripping on Mirae’s shoes. She may not wish to stand in wet shoes for the rest of the afternoon.”

Nimara looked down.

“Oh.”

A third drop landed on Mirae’s other shoe.

Then several more escaped from Nimara’s edges, one after another.

“I may be slightly fuller than I thought. Sorry about your shoes, Mirae. Now I must focus and hold the rest in until I reach the orchard.”

“That would be wise,” said Caelum.

The wind immediately pushed Nimara toward the forest.

“The orchard is the other way!” Nimara called.

The wind pushed harder.

“Didn’t I tell you? The wind always has an opinion of its own. Come on, then!”

She gathered in her loose edges and pulled toward the orchard. The wind caught one side of her and curled it into a crooked umbrella.

“An umbrella? Now? On that side? Are you kidding me? You are doing this on purpose!” Nimara called to the wind.

“Left!” Mirae shouted as she ran beneath Nimara, trying to make herself heard above the wind’s sudden rush.

“On it!”

“The umbrella part is pulling you right!”

“I know! I did not ask for an umbrella!”

Caelum moved alongside Nimara, placing himself between her and the wind.

“Try now,” he said.

Nimara pulled. Caelum held steady. The wind gave one final shove, and she slid into place above the orchard.

“I cannot hold these drops much longer. I’m still leaking around the edges!”

“There is no need to hold them any longer,” said Caelum. “You are in place. Let them go.”

The first drops struck the leaves with soft, separate taps. Then warm summer rain swept through the branches, drummed against the dry earth, and spilled across the meadow.

Mirae stayed where she was. Her shoes were wet already. The rain soaked her hair and ran warmly down her face as she lifted her arms and laughed.

Above her, rabbit ears rose, a teapot spout curled, a sail billowed, and a dolphin leaped. Then every shape loosened and disappeared into rain.

Nimara no longer looked like anything at all.

She simply poured.

Water ran from the leaves into the grass and gathered beneath the trees in silver threads, already beginning its long journey back toward the sea.

Three Things After the Rain

At last, the rain softened.

Nimara emerged from the gray, smaller now and pearly white once more. One of her edges still resembled a crooked umbrella, a lingering reminder of the wind's antics.

The meadow steamed. Everything smelled green.

"I have to go home," Mirae said. "I'm dripping."

"So am I," said Nimara. "It is the best part."

"I'm sure it is for you. You're a cloud. I'll be cold and soggy before I'm halfway home."

"I am not only a cloud, mind you," Nimara said with a smile.

"I know," Mirae said, smiling back. "You're Nimara, and you do important work."

She turned toward the path, then stopped.

"Oh, and I know what I'll do first when I get home. Finish my bridge."

"To prove to Emma that you can finish something?"

Mirae rolled her eyes. "No. Because it's blocking my bedroom doorway."

Nimara laughed. "You caught me there," she said, and winked.

The crooked umbrella stretched itself out, remembered it had once been a wing, and gave a little shake. Something small and white came turning down out of the wet air and landed in the grass beside Mirae's shoe.

She picked it up. It was a tiny white down feather, still damp from the rain.

"Left over from my bird idea," Nimara said. "I kept it for you."

“For me?”

“For the next time somebody tells you what you are.” Nimara drifted a little lower. “One thing about you is never all of you. And that is the right way to use never.”

Mirae closed her hand around it.

“Thank you.”

“Besides,” said Nimara, “I have plenty of cloud left.”

“What has that to do with the down feather?” Mirae asked.

“Nothing at all. Just being silly. Off you go, Mirae.”

Mirae ran home through the long, wet grass with the feather held securely in her hand so the wind could not have it back.

Mom took one look at her and said, “Shoes off.”

She did not say anything at all about the puddle.

Still holding the feather carefully, Mirae hurried upstairs. She stepped over the bridge and laid the feather on her windowsill, beside all the other things she had brought home.

Then she fetched her basket of blocks and built the second tower. When the last block was in place, she moved the finished bridge carefully against the wall.

The book lay open on the rug where she had left it.

She left it exactly there. She knew where she was, and it would still be waiting tomorrow.

Then she sat down at her art table.

The yellow house was waiting for its sky.

Mirae filled her jar with clean water and painted the blue all the way across, right into the corners. Then she added a cloud. Not resembling anything. Just exactly right. And with that, she had finished her painting.

She left it to dry.

That evening, Mirae climbed into bed, her hair still smelling faintly of rain.

Somewhere above the roof, Nimara was drifting on, gathering water, complaining about the wind, and doing her important work.

Tomorrow, Mirae thought, she would look up and see what Nimara tried next.

... and in the quiet, something small had bloomed and settled.

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A Little Heart-to-Heart

A few gentle questions you can explore together – to help your child see that most people finish some things and leave others unfinished.

Do you usually finish things, or leave them unfinished? Or maybe both?

Share your answer too:

"I'm both. I take care of the things that need doing, like going to work. But I leave things unfinished too. I still have a knitting project waiting for me."

Has anyone ever said that you *always* or *never* do something? And do you think that is true?

Let them tell you what happened. Then help them understand why statements such as *you always*, *you never*, or *you never ever* are not true: they exclude every occasion when the child did something differently.

You might say:

"I understand why that hurt. Something may have been unfinished, but 'you never finish anything' is not true. Never leaves out every time you finished something and everything you take care of each day. One unfinished thing does not make you lazy, bad, or unable to finish things. I see all those other times, too. And none of it changes how much I love you."

And one silly question:

If Nimara floated into your room and turned into one of your unfinished things, what would she become? And what would the wind turn her into next?

If they need ideas, perhaps she becomes a half-built block tower, an unfinished picture, or a puzzle with only the corners done. Then the wind might turn her into a flying sock, a banana-shaped whale, or an umbrella wearing boots.

Parent Tip

Not every unfinished thing needs the same response.

Some things need finishing because someone or something depends on them. Other things belong to play, curiosity, and experimentation. They can wait, change, or be left behind.

If something needs finishing, name the task clearly:

"Your homework still needs finishing."

"Please put the blocks away before dinner."

Avoid turning it into a judgment like *"You never finish anything."*

Finishing is a skill children are still learning. It is not a measure of laziness, goodness, or ability.

If your child already feels labeled, remind them of the things you see them finishing and taking care of. Sometimes they need to borrow your confidence in them until their own returns.

Journal Page Prompt

All the things I have already finished

Draw or write about as many things as you can remember finishing.

Big things, little things, things that needed doing, and things you loved doing.

Maybe you finished a drawing or a puzzle, read a book, built a block tower, did your homework, got dressed, set the table, or put your toys away.

How many can you fit on the page?

From my heart to yours – may this story bring light to the quiet places.

The Mirae Tales Blessing Cards

A heartfelt collection for kids learning to love who they are

MIRAE BLESSING CARD

From Story 5 • Card 5 A

Sometimes you leave
things unfinished –
and you finish many
things, too.

Both are true.

“But ‘you never finish anything’
means no exception ever, and I can
assure you that is not true. Even a
cloud cannot stretch it that far.”

– Wisdom from Nimara (Mirae Tale 5)



MIRAE BLESSING CARD

HOLD THIS WHEN...

...someone points to what you left
unfinished and makes you feel
lazy, bad, or as though you
cannot finish anything.

They may have noticed something
true – but it is not the whole truth
about you.

You also finish things. You take
care of things. And the things you
leave unfinished do not decide
who you are.



From “Mirae and the Cloud with Unfinished Business”

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FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

THE GIFT OF SEEING THE WHOLE CHILD

“Never is a very large word,
especially when a friend puts it in
your ear.”

— Nimara

Children can quickly turn a comment
about an unfinished task into a belief
about who they are.

When something needs finishing, keep the
focus on the task: “*This still needs finishing,*”
rather than “You never finish anything.”

Finishing is a skill children are still
learning — not a measure of character or
worth. If a label has already landed, remind
your child of everything it left out.

From “Mirae and the Cloud with Unfinished Business”

A Note for Parents, Caregivers, and Educators

The Mirae Tales are designed to nurture connection, confidence, and self-awareness in children — whether shared as bedtime stories, daytime reading, or during quiet moments of togetherness.

The little heart-to-hearts, parent tips, and journal prompts included with each tale can be used at any time of day — morning, afternoon, or before sleep. There is no "right" moment — only the one that feels right for you and your child.

Let these tales become gentle companions, helping you build meaningful conversations and celebrate every child's unique light.

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*The Mirae Tales is a heart-born series created to nurture self-love, quiet courage, and the joy of becoming who you are meant to be.
Thank you for reading and respecting the spirit of this work.*